LIFE AND TIMES

OF

ROBERT ROBB, Esq.

Muncy Township,

Lycoming County, Pa.

BY JOHN F. MEGINNESS.

(JOHN OF LANCASTER)

34394

MUNCY:
LUMINARY PRESS.
1899.

Mrs. J. B. Mauzy
Jan 1901

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and times of Robert Robb, Esq.
township, Lycoming co., Pa.

Muncy, Pa.: 1899

THE ROBB FAMILY.

First Appearance in Cumberland County—Settlement of a Branch In the Muncy Valley, Lycoming County, as Early as 1770.

I

When the lands of the West Branch Valley of the Susquehanna, lying east of Lycoming Creek, came into market in the early part of 1769, many of the settlers who were attracted thither by the beauty and fertility of the country, were from Cumberland County. In the battle of Muncy Hills, fought in September, 1763, by a party of over one hundred men, more than one half of them were reported to be from Cumberland County. They were on their way up the river to the Great Island for the purpose of punishing hostile Indians who were in the habit of descending the river to attack white settlers in the lower counties. After the battle, in which two white men were killed outright, and two died of their wounds, the party turned back.

* * *

Many of the early settlers here were Scotch-Irish. They were a bold, hardy, adventuresome people, and they were nearly always found in the advance guard of civilization. Among them were the Robbs of Cumberland

County—John Robb and his sons, John, Robert, James, and David. It is not unlikely that some of them were in the battle of Muncy Hills. Comparatively little, however, is known of the early history of the family; but that they were of genuine Scotch-Irish origin, there is no doubt.

Jonathan Lodge, a deputy surveyor, reported that he was sent to the valley in the summer of 1769 to make surveys for certain parties, and among them appears the name of James Robb. This would make it appear that he was among the first applicants for land here.

* * *

That the Robbs came to this country in the first half of the eighteenth century there is little doubt. The first mention of the name among the early settlers of Cumberland County is found on page 299, vol. II, Fourth Series of Dr. W. H. Egle's Notes and Queries, published at Harrisburg. Speaking of James Wood, who emigrated from the North of Ireland, the Doctor says:

James Wood first settled in Upper Paxtang, Lancaster County (now Dauphin), about 1735. With a few of his neighbors he crossed the Susquehanna river with his family and settled close to the western boundary of Lowther Manor (then held as a reservation by the Penn family), at a place known as "Sporting Hill," in Silver Spring township. His neighbors were William McMeans, James Silver, William and John Orr, John

McCormick and his two brothers, Samuel Fisher, Samuel Thompson, Henry Quigley, William Berryhill, William Noble, and *Robert and James Robb*, all fellow countrymen, originally from the north of Ireland.

"This neighborhood," continues Dr. Egle in the article quoted from, "coustituted the first regular settlement in Cumberland county."

* * *

The time Wood settled in Cumberland, it must be borne in mind, was in 1735, and among his neighbors was Robert and James Robb. It is believed they were brothers.

As nearly as can be ascertained, the Robbs came to Muncy Valley in 1770, and there settled. The territory of the valley then belonged to Berks County. On the 21st of March, 1772, Northumberland County was erected, and on the 9th of April following Muncy township was organized by decree of court held at Fort Augusta, now Sunbury. The new township, which included the magnificent valley of Muncy, thus became one of the oldest political sub-divisions of the new county, and it has borne this name down to the present time, although it has been greatly curtailed in its original proportions.

Mention is occasionally made by some writers of a John Robb at an early date. He is believed to have been the father of the four brothers that came to Muncy Valley in search

of a place to found homes, but what became of him is unknown.

In the early part of 1787 residents of Muncy Valley petitioned the Assembly to organize a new county, as they were too far away from Sunbury for convenience. Among the signers appears the name of "John Robb, Sr.," which has caused some confusion among writers when trying to reconcile matters. It is believed, however, that the signer was the oldest of the four brothers that came to Muncy Valley, and the uncle of Robert Robb's son John, as will presently appear. The latter, it will be shown, was born January 23, 1761, and was, therefore, twenty-six years old when the petition was signed in 1787.

What became of the earlier John Robb, is unknown. He must have been a man well advanced in years when he came here, as his eldest son, John, was born about 1725, and died early in the nineteenth century. If he died here it is likely he was buried in the graveyard at Halls, which is one of the oldest in Muncy Valley. Several settlers killed by the Indians —among them Capt. John Brady— were interred there.

* * *

The sons of John Robb, Sr., of whom we have any account, were as follows;

2 *i*, John, b. about 1725; came to Muncy Valley in 1770; married

Jerusha Craft. In October, 1772, he was appointed by the Court at Sunbury one of the viewers to lay out the *first* public road from Northumberland to Sutton's, on the east side of Lycoming Creek.* The road was laid out and is the public highway to-day leading up the river through Milton, Muncy, and Williamsport. He was also appointed the first constable for Muncy township. In the early part of the spring of 1776, when Col. William Plunket made his famous raid up the North Branch to dispossess the Wyoming settlers, who were trying to effect a lodgment in the valley under Connecticut titles, he commanded a company of volunteers and took an active part in that illfated expedition.

On the breaking out of the Revolution he was appointed Captain of the third company, Third Battalion of militia, March 13, 1776, organized under the direction of the Committee of Safety for Northumberland County. Heitman's Register of Continental Army officers, page 347, gives his military record as follows:

2 Robb, John (Pa.) 2d Lieutenant 1st Battalion of Miles' Pennsylvania Rifle regiment, 17th March to December, 1776; Captain Penn-

*Linn's Annals of Buffalo Valley, p. 44.

sylvania State regiment, 18th of April, 1777; regiment designated 13th Pennsylvania, 12th November, 1777; retired 1st July, 1778.

According to this record he saw some hard service, participated in a number of engagements, and his regiment was badly cut up. After his retirement he seems to have settled down to the quiet life of a farmer and died near what is now Clarkstown early in the present century..

On November 30, 1814, John Robb and his wife Ida Waldron, (daughter of Cornelius Waldron,) sold a small piece of land to William Cox Ellis, Esq., for $40. This John Robb was the eldest son of Robert Robb, and nephew of Captain Robb, of the Revolution.

Another record in the Register's office, Williamsport, shows that John Robb and Jerusha Craft, his wife, on the 19th of May, 1817, conveyed a piece of land to one John Gillaspy. They had a son named John C., and a daughter Mary, who married Jacob Fiester.

The son, John Craft Robb, b. November 2, 1809, left home early. When only eleven years old (about 1820) he went to Tioga County and lived for a few years with Aaron Niles, in Niles' Valley. Afterwards took up his

residence with Charles Ford, at Lawrenceville, and remained there several years. About 1831 he purchased a farm in Farmington township and there settled. He married Susan Locke and they had four children, viz: 1. Rachel, deceased. 2. Levi R. deceased. Enlisted in 1861 and was mustered in as sergeant of Company H, 45th Pennsylvania Volunteers; re-elisted January 1, 1864, and promoted to second Lieutenant January 24, 1865, and later to the rank of Captain. He participated in many battles. In the Wilderness a part of his brigade was captured and marched off southward, but Lieutenant Robb determined to escape and broke for liberty. The guard fired on him and his clothes were pierced by thirty-two bullets, but he escaped uninjured and rejoined his regiment. He was mortally wounded at Fort Hell, in Front of Petersburg, April 2, 1865, and died at City Point Hospital seven days later. 3. Minerva, m. Jeremiah E. Green, of Tioga. 4. James L.,* b. May 4, 1842. Enlisted in Company B, 194th New York Volunteers and served with the rank of second Lieutenant until mustered out. He is

*For biographical sketch and portrait see Brown's Hist. Tioga County, pp. 377 and 830, and for a sketch and portrait of his son James L., see same work, pp. 716 and 769.

married and is now a prominent resident of Wellsboro. John C., father of the above children, d. October 7, 1877, and his wife d. April 6, 1890, at the age of 72 years. Mr. Robb served as justice of the peace from 1840 to 1845, and as a county auditor from 1851 to 1854.

2 *ii*, Robert, b. in Cumberland County September 11, 1727, and died in Muncy township, Lycoming County, September 10, 1814. He married Susannah Fleming, September 4, 1759. She was born November 19, 1739, and died in Muncy township, February 1, 1816, in her 78th year. The history of Robert Robb and family will appear later on.

3 *iii*, James, b. in Cumberland County about 1729. He came to Muncy Valley with his brothers, but only remained a short time. Comparatively nothing is known of his history. Tradition says that he drifted to Westmoreland County and there settled. In 1795 one Samuel Robb married Louisa, youngest daughter of Major General Arthur St. Clair, who then lived in Westmoreland County, and it is supposed that he was a son of James. No records are known to be in existence showing the ancestry of Samuel Robb, much to the regret of the

writer. He died in 1853, having survived his wife thirteen years, she having passed away May 27, 1840, in her 68th year. Both sleep side by side in the Cemetery at Ligonier. The age of Samuel is unknown, because the inscription has faded from his tombstone. They had three sons and three daughters surnamed Robb, and they are supposed to have descendants both in Westmoreland and Butler Counties.

4 *iv*, David, b about 1731, in Cumberland County. It appears that he came to Muncy Valley with his elder brothers, but it is unknown how long he remained here. There is a tradition that he never married, but it appears from the record of deeds at Williamsport that on the 12th of May, 1796, "David Robb, of Cumberland County, and Mary his wife," sold 303 acres to William Rush. He had obtained the land by patent dated May 2, 1793, it being the same land surveyed unto Thomas Ross, December 13, 1784, who, on April 5, 1785, conveyed it to David Robb in fee. Was he the David Robb who once lived in Muncy township, or a member of another family in Cumberland County?

2 ROBERT ROBB.

Nativity and History--Appointed An Ensign—Also Coroner of Cumberland County—Removed to Muncy Valley.

II.

The history of Robert Robb, the chief subject of these sketches, is one of deep and thrilling interest. From the best information at hand it is believed that he was reared to manhood in that portion of Lancaster County lying west of the Susquehanna river, which afterwards was taken to form Cumberland. He received such education as the times warranted. As he belonged to the sturdy Scotch-Irish race who first settled Carlisle and the beautiful valley of Cumberland, he was naturally enterprising and aggressive. When a young man he learned the trade of a wagon maker, but there is nothing to show if he followed it for any length of time; but as wagons were much in demand in those times, especially about the time of the illfated Braddock expedition and the French and Indian war, it is not strange that he learned that trade, if he did not follow it for any length of time.

* * *

That Robert Robb early gave promise

of becoming a leading and representative man is attested by his appointment by the Colonial Governor Denny to the position of ensign in The Third Battalion of the Pennsylvania regiment, raised to resent the encroachments of the French and Indians on the western frontier. His commission bears date April 26, 1758, the 31st year of the reign of George II, and although time-stained and aged in appearance, it is yet plain and distinct, and is carefully preserved as a precious relic by his grandson, Robert Robb, the second, of Muncy. At the time of his appointment he was in the 31st year of his age, was strong and rugged, and well qualified to undergo the hardships of a military campaign in the wilderness of Western Pennsylvania.

He marched with his regiment under Bouquet and took part in the military operations, which is shown by the proffer of a grant of land in Kentucky, an account of which will appear at the proper place. In less than a year after the campaign (Sept. 4, 1759), he married Miss Susannah Fleming, of Lancaster County. She belonged to a distinguished Scotch family, whose history dates back for hundreds of years. For ten years or more after their marriage they continued to live in Cumberland County.

We are uninformed as to what his calling was during the ten years or

more he lived in Cumberland County after his marriage, but infer that he devoted his time to farming. That he was regarded as a young man of some standing is further attested by his appointment as Coroner* of Cumberland County, by Lieutenant Governor James Hamilton, October, 1760, and his re appointment by the same executive October, 1762. His term of service, therefore, extended through four years.

* * *

It is probable that Robert Robb and his brothers came to the valley first. J. M. M. Gernerd, in his *Now and Then* for July, 1877, devotes a long article to a discussion of the condition of the country and the few inhabitants when the Robb's came, and, among other things, says:

As Mrs. Scudder was the first woman to settle on this side of the Muncy Hills, her advent was a matter of some importance. At least so thought David Robb. David and his three brothers, John, Robert and James, had located some distance from the river, and were as yet doing their own housekeeping. They had not heard of the arrival of Mrs. Scudder. One pleasant morning soon after she came David explored the valley in search of game. The only item of dress on his person was his shirt Why need he wear additional clothing on such a day and in such a country? As he was near Scudder's place he concluded to step over to the cabin and enjoy a few moments conversa-

*Colonial Records, Vol. VIII. pp. 506, and 781.

tion. He had almost reached the threshold when he very unexpectedly faced Mrs. Scudder. Oh! horror! a woman! He turned on his heels and bounded away like a deer. Mrs. Scudder used to say that he "ran as if the Indians were after him," and her family—down to the fourth and fifth generation—have never ceased to laugh at the mere mention of "David Robb's fright."

As Mary Scudder, daughter of Susan Scudder, referred to above, was born May 21, 1771, the Scudder family probably came as early as 1770. Mary Scudder enjoys the historical distinction of being the *first* white child born north of Muncy Hills. The cabin of her parents stood on the banks of Glade run near the canal.

From these dates it is probable that the Robb brothers came here in 1770. When they came to the valley there were scarcely any settlers outside of Muncy Manor. Samuel Wallis, the great land speculator of those times, had settled on the bank of the river at what is now known as Halls, and built a small stone house, which is still standing.

* * *

Robert Robb negotiated with Wallis for the purchase of a tract of land containing about four hundred acres. It was located on what is known as White Oak run, north of the Haines property, and part of it is still in the possession of his descendants, being now owned by his grandson, Robert

Robb, of Muncy. On this tract of land a fine spring of water flowed at the base of a hill, and there he built a rude cabin and made preparations to bring his family to the new country. His place of location was north of the river three miles or more, near the footnills of the Alleghenies. At this time the Indians had left the valley, but occasionally a straggler appeared to visit the spot where the wigwams of his ancestors had stood, and linger about their graves.

The valley, which takes its name from its original inhabitants, the Monsey Indians—a trlbe or sub-division of the Delawares—was an attractive place for the untutored children of nature, and when they bade it adieu and turned their faces towards the setting sun, they seemed to realize that their destiny was to gradually vanish before the approaching white man and finally disappear from the face of the earth.

Just what year Robert Robb brought his family here is not positively known, but probably it was some time in the early part of the year 1772. At that time he had a family of six children, one son and five daughters. The eldest, John, was fifteen years old, and the youngest, Sarah, was born November 7, 1770. The seventh child, Susannah, was born October 18, 1772; therefore we conclude that between these dates the family was

brought to Muncy Valley—probably in the early part of 1772.

* * *

Peace reigned among the settlers for a few years after the Indians had departed from the valley, and the tide of emigration steadily rolled in and increased the population. Cabins arose on every hand, patches of cleared ground increased and bounteous crops sprang up in season to cheer the hearts of those who had cast their lots in this new land. Everything betokened thrift, prosperity and happiness. There was the nucleus of a village started where now is the centre of the borough of Muncy. One of the leading settlers was the famous Capt. John Brady. He had built a log house and surrounded it with a stockade, and it came to be known as "Brady's Fort."

On the 9th of April, 1772, a court of private sessions of the peace, sitting at Fort Augusta authorized the division of the immense territory comprising the new county of Northumberland into seven townships, of

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*The original boundaries of Muncy township were defined as follows: Beginning on the west side of the West Branch of the Susquehanna, opposite the end of Muncy Hill [at what is now the Montgomery railroad bridge]; thence up the West Branch to opposite the mouth of Lycoming; thence crossing the river and ascending Lycoming Creek to the head thereof [near Canton]; thence by a southeast line to the Muncy Hills; thence along the top of the same to the West Branch and crossing it to the beginning. Muncy was the mother of all the townships in the present county, north of the river, and from her territory at least twenty have been created since 1772. She is now the twenty-seventh in relative size out of forty-two and contains 9,440 acres, and, by the census of 1890, had a population of 701.

which Muncy was one.* It took some time to effect an organization of the more distant townships from the county seat. In August, 1773, Robert and James Robb, with others, were appointed by the court "viewers to lay out a road from John Scudder's place, on the bank of the river at Muncy to the crossing of the Wyalusing path on Muncy Creek." This was the second road authorized to be laid out in the township of Muncy by the court.

* * *

In the assessment of Muncy township taxables for 1774—the first of which we have any record—appear the following names: John Robb, Robert Robb, James Robb and David Robb.

Robert Robb rapidly came into prominence as one of the leading men in the settlement, and on the 29th of July, 1775, he was commissioned a Justice of the Peace by the Provincial authorities for Northumberland County. His district was Muncy township, and his appointment was made under the regime of the Penns. His tenure of office, however, did not last long, for in 1776 the Penns were ousted by legislative enactment as Proprietarys of the Province of Pennsylvania, and a new state government established. This new order of things was followed by the appointment of new justices.

* * *

At this juncture in the affairs of the

county a new condition arose. The mutterings of the revolution were now heard in the land. There was great excitement on every hand, meetings were held and the question of separation from the mother country was excitedly discussed. The inhabitants of the West Branch Valley were full of patriotism and an overwhelming majorty favored separation. As the clangor of arms began to resound through the land the excitement increased among the people and soon all business was practically at a stand still. Committees of safety were appointed in each county and the work of organizing militia companies was commenced. The first Committee of Safety for Muncy township was composed as follows: Robert Robb, Esq., William Watson and John Buckalow, and they served for six months from the beginning of 1776, when another committee was appointed to serve the balance of the year.

Robert Robb, Esq., took his place on the first committee and attended its meetings. His brother John, as has been shown, entered the military service early and became conspicuous as a patriot and soldier.

The committee for the last half of 1776 was composed of Mordecai McKinney, James Giles and Andrew Culbertson. The first lived at Muncy and was one of the original settlers on the Manor, the second lived at

what is now DuBoistown, but the place of residence of Giles is unknown, although it is supposed to have been in the vicinity of Loyalsock. Robert Robb appears to have served his term of six months on the Committee of Safety satisfactorily and was succeeded by the committee mentioned above.

THE REVOLUTION.

Robb Gets Into Trouble With the Committee of Safetey and Is Harrassed and Persecuted—The Testimony Submitted.

III.

At this point in the life of Robert Robb a contention arose with the County Committee of Safety, which was the cause of much bitter feeling on both sides, and harmony among the parties involved was not restored for years. Certain parties, it appears, had taken offense at some remarks Robb had made regarding the war and some of the leading men of the day, and they finally accused him of disloyalty and demanded that Capt. John Brady should prefer charges against him and report the same to the Committee of Safety. The bad feeling which was engendered on this account finally resulted in a crusade of persecution against Robb which was

as disgraceful as it was vindictive. A full account of his trial before the Committee of Safety has been preserved and may be found in volume XIV, Second Series Pennsylvania Archives, pp. 352-358.

* * *

Captain Brady evidently was greatly perplexed over the complaints of the enemies of Robb, and was not inclined to believe him guilty of the charges. This is shown by the following note which he addressed to the accused:

SIR—The complaints alleged and made against you are of such a nature that they surprise me; but, I have long been acquainted with you, and can trust to your honor and ability to acquit yourself. Your being acquitted or condemned does not come before me; but I have been solicited to apprehend you, and threatened on my non-compliance. God forbid that you are guilty. I am obliged, by order of a superior nature, to go over the Muncy Hill. I will be back by 2 o'clock this day, when I would be glad to see you. You may depend that no enemy of yours shall ever influence me to do anything unbecoming my own duty as an officer, and friend to the liberty of America, and I hope it will be in your power to demonstrate to the world you are not a foe to America.

I am your humble servant,

JOHN BRADY.

No date is appended to this letter, but it is supposed to have been written in December, 1776. There is an air of sincerity and manliness about it which shows that Brady did not sym-

pathise with those who were finding fault with Robb. But being an officer he was forced to arrest him, when complaint was made; and failing to act promptly he was "threatened," as he says, by the accusing parties.

* * *

From the record, as printed in the volume cited above, it appears that on the 14th of December, 1776, the Committee met to consider the charges against Robb, which were preferred by Capt. John Brady, as follows:

1. That the congress had blinded the eyes of the public.

2. That he had discouraged the men drafted to go in the militia and that he had influenced George Silverthorn so that he nor any of his family would not fight against the King of Great Britain.

3. That the terms Lord Howe had proposed were such as we should accept of, or what would be pleasing to him.

4. That Benjamin Franklin, one of the Congress, was a villain and behaved as such often.

5. That it was Mr. Robb's opinion there was bribery in the convention.

Evidence in the form of affidavits accompanied these grave charges. It is not surprising that the committee was amazed at these accusations against one of the leading men of the township. Capt. John Brady, his accuser, then resided in what is now almost the central part of the borough of Muncy, where he had built a log

house and stockaded it as a protection against threatened Indian attack. He was intensely opposed to the British government and favored the cause of liberty.

A synopsis of the affidavits filed to support the above charges will show their purport. Thomas Newman, who made his mark, swore that he heard Robb say that the conditions of peace offered by General Howe suited him, and that he believed Franklin was a rogue; "that he had led the government into two or three scrapes already known to him; that it was thought Franklin had a pension from home; that the convention was bribed." Lord Howe had used the committee sent to treat with him politely, but they had used him ill. Deponent thought that the Committee[of Safety] should consider these things.

Joseph Newman, probably a brother or son, confirmed the above testimony and then signed his name.

John Morris, who was also unable to write his name, testified that he had heard Robb say that peace was kept back by Congress, and that it was well known what Rittenhouse and Franklin were; that it was a minority that held this new form of goverment, and that the majority should not be ruled by the minority.

Another witness, James Giles, had seen Robb pull out a paper and read Howe's terms of peace, and then heard

him say that he believed our rulers kept peace back.

John Silverthorn had been at Robb's house and then went with him to "a chimney raising" in the neighborhood; that while there "Robb pulled out a hand bill which gave an account of General Washington's army being in need of a reinforcement, and said in public that it was necessary for every one to turn out that could go; after a while he pulled out another paper, which he said was a declaration of peace from Lord Howe and read it in public; after reading said paper Mr. Robb said he came on purpose to see Mr. Newman, whether or not he thought proper to call some of the neighbors together in order to see whether the declaration was of any effect or not (as he was one of the town Committee), and how they would take it, as he could not depend on his own judgment on such an occasion, as being but one person." Deponent further said that "after the papers came out with an account of what passed between General Howe and the Committee at Staten Island, he was telling Robb that he heard them read at McKinney's, and Mr. Robb said he thought it would not be proper to lay down their arms till peace would be concluded on better terms than these for the benefit of the country."

Lieut. John Scudder swore that

"Robb said that the King's troops are able to learn us to beat themselves, as Peter the Great said of Charles, King of Sweden, and Robb never did anything against the cause of America, but always encouraged the same to the best of his knowledge; and further said that Mr. Newman charged Robb with discouraging people going into the service, and that George Silverthorn and his family were the people."

After hearing the evidence the committee concluded that "Robb had behaved in such a manner as to give just grounds for this committee to *suspect* him of being not only unfriendly, but even inimical to our common cause," therefore they passed this resolution:

Resolved, That said Robert Robb shall either take his gun and march immediately with the militia of this county into actual service for the defense of the United States, in order to wipe off the present evil suspicions, or otherwise to be committed to the care of Lt. Col. James Murray, of the Second Battalion, to be by him sent to some proper place of confinement nntil released by further authority.

Signed by order of the Committee.

PAUL GEDDES, Chairman.

* * *

On the 18th of December, 1776, the committee held another meeting for the purpose of again considering the Robb case, as he had appealed from their decision and asked to have his case heard by the Council of Safety

of the state. And after considering his application the following resolution was passed:

Resolved, That said Robb may appeal to said council. under the care of said Colonel Murray.

PAUL GEDDES, Chairman.

The action of the committee caused a great deal of comment in the neighborhood and excitement ran high. Robb and his friends were greatly incensed and did not hesitate to express their opinion of the committee in terms not very compliimentary.

* * *

On the 1st of January, 1777, the committee again met to hear the "complaint of Peter Smith against Robert Robb." Smith made affidavit that "on the 20th day of last month, at the house of Captain John Brady, said Robb did violently beat and very much abuse said Smith, and further produceth James Brady and Jean Cannon as evidence of said charge, and also Patrick Murdock as evidence afterwards of the wounds alleged to be received by said Smith from said Robb."

The evidence of James Brady was: "On Friday, the 20th day of December last, Robert Robb did, at the house of his father and in his presence, violently beat and abuse the above said Smith, and continued so to do until he rescued him out of his hands. Deponent further saith that Robert Robb said he believed the

committee had got very little satisfaction of him, and that they were a set of rascals, some of them were robbers, some were horse thieves and some of them were murderers."

Jean Cannon testified that "she saw Peter Smith immediately after his difference with Robert Robb, and that said Smith seemed to her to have been very much abused, as she understood, by said Robb; and further that Robb said the committee were a set of rascals, etc."

These charges and counter charges greatly perplexed the committee, and it was finally resolved to adjourn until the 14th instant. On that date the committee met at the house of George McCandlish to hear evidence in behalf of Robert Robb.

At this meeting James Patton deposed and said that "he, with Peter Smith and some others, were drinking together at the house of Capt. John Brady, when said Smith asked Robb what news; Mr. Robb answered that he desired none of his discourse, and asked James Brady if there was any fire in the new house. Brady said there was. Mr. Robb then got up and asked this deponent if he would go into the house and drink share of half a pint. This deponent said he would. After sitting down the aforesaid Smith came in. Says Mr. Robb, you have followed me here again, Peter. Mr. Robb further said, if you

choose to sit here, I will go into the other house, and if you follow me I will flog you or turn you out. Mr. Robb then got up and asked this deponent to go with him to the other house. This deponent further saith that Mr. Robb said that once in his day he never thought to be tried by such men as some of the committee; some of them had been tried for murder, and some for horse stealing."

* * *

The committee, it is evident, also became incensed at Robb, and instead of acting with discretion in this matter --which had become a case of personal crimination and recrimination —after a short consultation passed this resolution:

WHEREAS, a certain Robert Robb was brought before the Committee of this county, on account of sundry charges proven against him, and a resolve of this committee entered thereon, bearing date December 17, 1776, by virtue whereof he was committed to the custody of Col. James Murray, to be by him sent to some proper place of confinement until released by a superior authority; and

WHEREAS, the said Colouel Murray, out of lenity to said Robb's family, saw fit to appoint the mansion house of the said Robb as a prison for him on a promise of his good behavior for the future; but as said Robb hath since (as appears by sufficient testimony given before this committee), very ungratefully abused the lenity shown him by Colonel Murray, by barbarously beating and much abusing a certain Peter Smith of this county so as to

render him unable for a considerable time to support himself and his small family by his industry as usual, as appears by the testimony of said Smith, and other evidences produced before this Committee; and

WHEREAS, he did at the same time not only despise all authority of this Committee, but also charged them with horse stealing, robbery and murder, as appears by the testimony of said evidences, therefore

Resolved, That Colonel Murray be notified to take, or order to be taken, the aforesaid Robert Robb before the Council of Safety of this State, to whom he hath appealed, in order to answer the several charges proven against him before this Committee, which we have enclosed in a letter directed to the said Council of Safety, which you are desired to deliver with said prisoner.

Signed by order of the Committee.

PAUL GEDDES, Chairman.

* * *

It will appear to the disinterested reader in the light of more than a century afterwards, that the case on the part of the Committee had become simply one of persecution. Robb had been harrassed and goaded by enemies, which provoked him to make opprobrious remarks about certain members of the Committee which were hard to bear. And there is nothing to show that his charges were not true.

On the 15th the Committee resolved "that notice be sent to Capt. William Murray requesting his attendance tomorrow morning, which was accord-

ingly sent by Mr. Johnson." It may seem strange that the Committee simply *requested* the attendance of Colonel Murray to carry out the sentence of Robb.

This timidity indicates a doubt on their part whether they had authority so to act. If they had been invested with full power to try and dispose of his case they would have *commanded* the militia Colonel to carry out their orders without question.

Captain Murray paid no attention to the *request* of the Committee, and not appearing before them they passed these resolutions on the 16th:

Resolved, That Thomas Combs be hired and sent with a second notice to Captain Murray *requesting* his attendance immediately.

Upon Captain Murray's non-appearance they resolved again, thus:

Resolved, That the aforesaid Thomas Combs be again sent with a third notice to Captain Murray, and paid five shillings for his trouble.

Thomas Combs performed the duty assigned him by the Committee and returned with a letter from Captain Murray* in which he said: "I sent you word by Mr. McKnight and Mr. Johnson that I would not act any longer as an officer, and since you won't take my word I now send you

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* There were two officers by the name of Murray in the militia service at that time. James succeeding Dr. William Plunkett as Colonel of the third battalion; William was Captain of the fifth company, same battalion. They were brothers, natives of Scotland, and settled on Chillisquaque Creek in 1770.

my commission, and I hope you will believe me."

This was flat disobedience of orders, and goes to show that he considered the action of the Committee illegal, and he would not be a party to what he undoubtedly considered persecution on their part of Robert Robb.

The Committee was nonplussed, but their blood was up and they determined to have their orders carried out, and they immediately passed this resolution :

Resolved, That Simon Hemrod and Buchanan Smith be appointed to conduct Robert Robb to the Council of Safety of this State, and that they be paid two pounds five shillings for their trouble.

Under date of January 16, 1777, the Committee prepared the following letter, addressed to the Council of Safety at Philadelphia, and gave it to Hemrod and Smith to be delivered with the prisoner :

GENTLEMEN—This Committee thought fit to send you, by the bearers hereof, Robert Robb, with a true Copy of sundry Charges brought against him, together with our resolves thereon ; and as Capt. William Murray, to whose care the aforesaid Robb was committed both by Colonel Murray and this Committee, as appears by the inclosed papers, hath refused to carry said Robb before you, we were under the necessity of advancing six dollars to Simon Himrod and Buchanan Smith to execute the trust committed to said Murray, which money we expect you will be kind

enough to refund by the bearers, as we have no public money in our hands. We also do expect you will endeavor to support the authority of the Committee, if you think their existence at all necessary.

By order of Committee.,
PAUL GEDDES, Chairman.

* * *

The Committee it would seem were more concerned about getting back their six dollars than about Robb. And as the official record here ends, we are uninformed whether they obtained the money or not; but as this Committee passed out of existence in February, 1777, and was succeeded by a new Committee, consisting of John Coats, James Hampton and William Hammond, for Muncy township, it is doubtful if they ever were re-imburs-ed. Public money was a scarce article in those days. The Committee for the county (which was composed of three members from each township) reorganized by electing Thomas Jordan, Chairman, and John Coats, clerk.

With the demise of the old Committee the agitation about Robb seems to have died out. As there is no further record concerning his case we know nothing about the mission of Hemrod and Smith. There is a tradition, however, that they started with their prisoner and got as far as Lancaster, where the Committee of Safety was then sitting, when some compromise was effected and Robb returned to his home. The matter then rested

for several years. There is a vague tradition, but unsupported by any evidence, that the animus of this persecution of Robb grew out of the expulsion of the Wyoming settlers from this valley in September, 1775, by Colonel Plunket, interested parties desiring to force him into making certain admissions concerning this affair. His brother John had been a Captain under Plunket and had taken an active part in driving the Yankees out of the valley.

Then, again, he (Robb) had been promised a large tract of land in Kentucky by the King, as a bounty for his service as an officer under Bouquet in 1758. The hope of securing this land may have induced him to advocate a peaceful settlement of our troubles with the mother country. But there is nothing to show that he was unpatriotic, or opposed to the cause of liberty.

* * *

The war of the Revolution was now fairly under way. Capt. John Brady, who, by virtue of his office, was forced to prefer the charges against Robb, had gone to the army and was wounded in the battle of Brandywine. Soon afterwards he was sent home by order of General Washington to recruit and assist in protecting the frontier against a threatened invasion by the savages. But after preferring the charges against Robb in December, 1776, up to the time of his cowardly

assassination (April 11, 1779) by a band of lurking savages, his name was never mentioned again in connection with this affair. In his note to Robb he said that his acquittal or condemnation did not come before him, and that no enemy should influence him to do anything unbecoming his duty as an officer. And the inference is drawn from the language he used that he did not believe Robb was guilty of disloyalty.

THE BIG RUNAWAY.

Flight of the Settlers and Devastation of the Valley—Return of Robert Robb - His Trial, Acquittal and Vindication—His Family and Death.

IV.

As the war progressed times grew worse. The Indians, incited by the English, commenced attacking the frontier settlements and killing and scalping the inhabitants without regard to sex, age or condition. Finally the danger became so great that Colonel Hunter, commandant of Fort Augusta (now Sunbury), sent messengers up the river to warn the settlers to fly if they valued the lives of themselves and families. This was in the early part of June, 1778. A frightful panic followed. The flight,

which is known in history as the "Big Runaway" stands without a parallel so far as fear and excitement are concerned. The Indians came as anticipated, burned the cabins, laid the fields of the settlers in waste, and left a scene of desolation behind them.

* * *

Robert Robb lived fully three miles back from Wallis', and his family was in constant danger, as the Indians could suddenly emerge from the mountain fastness and attack them. Realizing the great danger, he acted on the order of Colonel Hunter at once, by making preparations to abandon his house. His family now consisted of his wife and nine children. The youngest, Isabella, was only a little over six months old. Owing to the exposed situation of his cabin, it is probable that Robb removed his family at once to Wallis'. He burned his wagon and buried the irons for safety, and hurriedly collecting a few household goods, carried them to the river and placed them on a flat boat with his family. And while the boat was descending the river, Robb and his brothers drove their stock by land to places of safety below. The family, with others, continued their flight to Cumberland county, where they arrived safely, and remained with friends until the danger was past.

* * *

How long the Robb family remain-

ed away from the valley we are uninformed, but it is probable that Mr. Robb himself returned as soon as it was considered safe, with many others, to look after and save their crops. He found his cabin burned and improvements destroyed, but hastily constructing another, he went to work again to retrieve what had been lost. The irons for his wagon were found all right, and having learned the trade of a wagon maker, he hastily constructed another which answered the purpose until he had time to make a better one.

As Mr. Robb was now over-fifty-two years of age the outlook for founding a home in this new country was not as rosy as it might be. But he was rugged and strong and a man of iron will and determination, and instead of sitting down to mourn over the ruins of his humble home, he went to work vigorously and succeeded in making a better one in a few years.

It is probable that Mrs. Robb and children returned in 1780 to their Muncy Valley home, and there she remained until the close of life. Robert Robb also spent the balance of his days there, and lived long enough to see the country in a prosperous condition.

The charges of disloyalty brought against him by Capt. John Brady were still hanging over him, and a source of annoyance to himself and

friends. A movement, therefore, was made to secure vindication. Accordingly, at the session of the criminal court for November, 1780, Robert Robb was indicted by the grand jury of Northumberland county, tried for misprision of treason and acquitted. Thus was he vindicated of the charge and restored to full fellowship and standing in the community.

* * *

That the character and standing of Mr. Robb in the community was of the highest order, is attested by the fact that on the 26th of October, 1791, Governor Thomas Mifflin commisioned him a Justice of the Peace for Muncy township and he held the office until his death, a period of about twenty-three years. Twice, therefore, he held the office—once under the Penn regime, and lastly under the Constitution of 1790. The commission, still in a good state of preservation, is carefully preserved by his grandson, Robert Robb, of Muncy.

Robert Robb and Susannah Fleming, his wife, had issue as follows, surname Robb:

i, John, b. January 23, 1761; m. Ida Waldron, but at what date is unknown. Neither is it known when they died. That he was living when his father executed his will, (October 2, 1813) is certain, for he named him as one of

his executors. Then, again, on the 30th of November, 1814, the records show that he and his wife conveyed a piece of land to William Cox Ellis, Esq. It is probabl that he did not long survive his father. How many children he had is not now known. He had one son, however, named John, who was nick named "Jack," to distinguish him from John C., son of Capt. John Robb, who married Jerusha Craft. He settled near Laporte, Indiana, became an extensive business man, acquired a handsome competency, and died about 1872. He never married.

ii, Mary, b. September 19, 1762; m. John Hill, the founder of Hillsgrove. The point where they settled was then in Muncy township, but is now Hillsgrove township, Sullivan county. Dr. Benjamin Rush, the eminent physician of Philadelphia, having lands for sale in this section. induced John Hill, a young Englishman, to come here and examine them. He came about 1794, was pleased with the lands and immediately purchased three tracts, on one of which the celebrated Daniel Ogden* had made an improvement. This was then in the heart

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* Ogden came from Cherry Valley, New York, with his large family and settled here about 1781. When Hill purchased his improvement he left about 1797, and ascending the river in a canoe, settled on what is now the site of the borough of Clearfield.

of the wilderness. Soon afterwards Hill married Mary Robb. She is described by those who knew her as a very amiable woman, and noted for her recollection of events. Mr. Hill, her husband, was well educated and their place soon became known as a pleasant house for those having business in connection with wild Lands.

John Hill executed his will May 10, 1828, and as it was probated May 3, 1834, he probably died during the preceding month. His wife was living when he made his will. They had issue, surname Hill: 1. Susannah, m. Joseph Sadler. 2. Mary, m. David Rogers. 3. Martha Jane, m. Isaac Craven, February 3, 1828. To each of these daughters the father willed one hundred acres of land lying on Loyalsock. One son, named John Cheatle Hill, was also provided for in the will. He became one of the most prominent citizens in the western part of the county, was noted as a good surveyor and a very useful man in public affairs, as well as that of the social and religious well being of society. He died about 1841, when comparatively young.

iii, Ann, b. November 18, 1764; m. Abram Webster. His father

came from England and settled on what was afterwards known as Henry Ecroyd's farm. In 1778 a band of Indians suddenly appeared, killed one son and carried another son, Abram, and two sisters into captivity. One of the girls was thrown from a canoe into Seneca Lake by an enraged squaw and drowned. The other was held a long time in captivity. Abram, after an absence of 12 years, returned and married Ann Robb, about 1792. They had issue as follows: Joseph, William; Catharine, m. James Walton; Susan, never m.; Elizabeth, m. Joseph Rynearson. Joseph, the eldest son, m. Elizabeth Rynearson and they had Ellen, Elizabeth, Charles S., Sarah, Annie, m. Dr. C. E. Albright, of Muncy, and Robert S. The will of Joseph Webster was probated April 27, 1858, which shows that he probably d. that month.

iv, Jane, b. October 23, 1766; d. unm. in 1783.

v, Margaret, b. November 28, 1768; m. Jacob Shoemaker. Letters of administration on his estate were granted September 1, 1826, showing that he must have died about that time. His widow survived him many years, dying at the age of about 90. They had issue, surname Shoemaker: 1, Peter, d.

unm.; 2, Charles, m. Mary Smith; 3, Ann, never m.; 4, Robert, never m.; 5, Hannah, m. John Montgomery; 6, Henry, never m.; 7, Eliza, m. Joseph Gudykunst; 8, Nelson, m. Miss Pellman; 9, Margaret, m. Rev. George C. Drake.

vi, Sarah, b. November 7, 1770; m. John Uhl. His will, probated January 2, 1834, shows that he probably d. in December, 1833. Among other things left to his wife, was a house and lot in Muncy, but he makes no mention of children. Date of Sarah's death unknown.

vii, Susannah, b. October 18, 1772; m. Joseph Tucker near the close of the last century. He d. intestate in December, 1812, and letters were issued, January 19, 1813, to John Robb and William Cox Ellis, and they sold 150 acres of land, March 31, 1814, to Simon Rorebach, at $16 per acre. The administrators, in their petition, mention seven minor children, surname Tucker, as follows: Mary, Martha, Thomas, Grace, Ann, John and Susannah. Date of death of the mother unknown.

viii, James, b. March 15, 1775; m. Mary Smith and d. March 5, 1857. His wife was b. January 26, 1788, and d. May 8, 1861. They had issue: 1, Jane, b. May 8, 1815;

m. Elijah M. Green, and d. November 25, 1897. Her two children—Robert Green, of Lewisburg, and Nathaniel Green, of Muncy, —survive her.

2, Robert, b. May 30, 1816, has been twice married. His first wife, Elizabeth McConnell, d. in 1858, leaving the following children: 1, Anna, m Walter McMichael, of Ontario, Canada, and d. in 1895. 2, Thomas W. Robb, m. Anna Fulmer, and they reside on the homestead farm; have three sons and four daughters. 3, Mary, m. Howard Lyon and d. October 28, 1884, leaving one daughter, Caroline.

Robert Robb married, secondly, Elizabeth J. McMichael in 1862, and they have had: 1, Sarah M., m. Morris Cuddy, of Towanda. 2, Elsie Ainslie, lives at home, in Muncy, with her parents.

Nathaniel, 3d child of James Robb, b. April 15, 1819; m. Elizabeth Thompson, and to them were born five children, as follows: James, Susan, Jane, Thompson and Margaret. Nathaniel d. about 1864. 4, Annie, never married. 5, Margaret, m. Dr. Rothrock, of Sonestown, and d. several years ago.

ix, Isabella, b. November 16, 1777; m. George Shoemaker. His will was probated February 2, 1848,

and his widow was then living. He probably d. in January of that year. He mentioned the following children, (surname Shoemaker) in his will: Jane, Barbara, Mary, Elizabeth, Susannah, Christiana, Thomas and Benjamin,

x, Elizabeth, b. July 7, 1780; m. Robert Ireland. Nothing is known of their history. They settled near Limestone run, east of Milton. His ancestors were among the earliest settlers in that part of the country.

xi, William Fleming, b. December 12, 1782; m. Mary Shoemaker and they had eleven children. In his will, probated August 17, 1863, he leaves all his property to his wife to be divided among his children as she may think best. In her will, probated May 14, 1864, she gave one-tenth of her estate to each of her surviving children as follows: 1. Sarah, m. Jacob Pott. 2. David, Jacksouville, Ill. 3. Henry. 4. Robert, Pittsburg. 5. Fleming, Wellington, b. near Muncy August 31, 1815. He m. Miss Ellen Montgomery June 23, 1843, and they had five children, only two—a son and a daughter—survive. In 1856 they went west settled near what is now Wyoming, Nebraska. In 1876 he was

Grandparents of Harry B. Drake — great grandparents of Marion Estelle Drake —

sent to the legislature. He d. suddenly of apoplexy April 10, 1896. 6. Susan, m. John Flack. 7. Sophia, m. Rev. George C. Drake. 8. Charles William, b. in 1822. He went to Pittsburg when a young man and studied law with his brother Robert. He was twice married, his first wife was Mrs. Caroline Amelia Gilbert, and his second Miss Rosetta Shoemaker Bennet, a granddaughter of the late Dr. Henry Shoemaker, and a great granddaughter of Mary Scudder, the first white child born on the Susquehanna West of Muncy Hills. One son, Charles A., and one daughter, Lillian, are from the first marriage; and one son, Henry, and three daughters, Fanny, Marion and Mary, are from the last. Mr. Robb early acquired distinction as a lawyer. He traveled much and was a wide awake observer. His death occurred at his home in Allegheny April 3, 1894. 9. John, d. in California, unm. 10. Daniel, d. unm. 11. Annie, m. Hon. H. J. B. Cummings, Winterset, Iowa.

* * *

After a busy and eventful life Robert Robb, Esq., died at his home in Muncy Valley, on the 10th of September, 1814, lacking but one day of being 87 years old. His wife, Susan-

nah, died February 1, 1816, in her 77th year. They were buried in the old graveyard at Halls, near the grave of Captain John Brady, but, as no stone marks their graves, all trace of their place of interment has long since been lost. At the close of his earthly career it may seem strange that his remains were laid near those of the man who had caused him so much trouble in 1778, or thirty-five years before. But the softening influence of more than the third of a century of time had removed all feeling on the part of the sturdy Scotchman, and it was fit that he should lie by the side of the enthusiastic patriot and hero of Brandywine.

Mr. Robb was a man noted for force of character, energy and promptness in the affairs of life. His judgment was clear, and, being a leading man in the community, his advice was often sought by his neighbors and freely given. As a justice of the peace he discouraged litigation and counseled the settlement of all disputes among neighbors without going to law, if possible. The fact that he was commissioned as a justice under two governments is pretty conclusive evidence of the ability and trustworthiness of the man. Having come of an ancestry noted for its deep religious convictions, it is no surprise to learn that he was a Covenanter and firm believer in the Pres-

byterian faith. He was a close Bible student and industrious reader of standard theological works, and spent much of his time in pondering over the great truths of religion. His descendants proved themselves worthy of their sire, and several of them became eminent in law and literature.

WILL OF ROBERT ROBB.

How He Divided His Estate Among His Ten Surviving Children—His Bible, His Books, and His Kentucky Lands—The Seven Sisters.

V.

As Robert Robb, Esq., was blessed with a robust constitution and a strong physical body, he retained great strength and vigor until he was past eighty years of age. His mind too did not become impaired and his memory remained remarkably tenacious almost to the close of his long and eventful career. This remarkable mental and physicial condition is evidenced by the fact that he did not execute his will until October 2, 1813, less than a year before he died. As a legal document it is typical of the man, and evidently was drawn by his own hand. His wife and his ten surviving children are all provided for; his daughters, the "seven sisters," were made equal heirs in the

great Kentucky land grant, but unfortunately it never materialized. The will is given herewith in full. It may be found in Will Book A, page 87:

* * *

I Robert Robb, of Muncy Twp., Lycoming county, and State of Pa., having for many years past officiated as a Justice of the Peace in said place, being weak of body but of sound mind and memory and understanding and calling to mind the uncertainties of human life, to prevent trouble after my decease, do make and ordain this my last will and testament.

In the first place I give and bequeath to my loving and beloved wife Susannah, all my household and kitchen furniture, of whatever kind they may be. Likewise four cows and four sheep—also all my outstanding debts of what kind soever, and what money may be in the house at the time of my decease, my large bible and all the books upon divinity, and the remainder time of a servant boy named Samuel Slice, for her own proper use, as she may think best. I also give my loving and beloved wife during her natural life the one-third part of the privilege of the mansion house and kitchen, and one-third of the rents, issues and profits of the plough land now cleared, or which may be cleared during my life, (except ten acres cleared by my sons lately, to which they are entitled to the crops) with one-third of the grain that may be growing at the time of my decease; and one-third part of the grass growing on the meadow, now cleared, or that may be cleared during my life, when cut and cured and put by for winter—also one-third of the right of pasturage upon the

place, and one-third of the barn, stable, etc., and outbuildings—also one-third of the right of my apple and peach orchard, with a full right to ingress and egress at all times. And further, I do allow my wife Susannah to pay all my lawful debts by me contracted.

Secondly. I give and bequeath to my son John my silver faced watch.

Thirdly. I give and bequeath to my other two sons, James and William, the place whereon I live, with fourteen acres of land which I purchased to it, being in the whole about 200 acres, be the same more or less, to them, their heirs and assigns forever in fee as tenants in common and not as joint tenants; and if they cannot agree upon a division between themselves, with my son John's assistance, then that the court should appoint six men, of whom John shall be one (if he then be living) to make the said division, and that they shall not dispose of the said land without the consent of their mother and brother John, during their mother's life.

I shall allow my son James to pay to my wife Susannah $100, the payment to commence one year after my decease, to be paid in two equal yearly payments. My son William being saddled with an expense in building, I exonerate him from any payment after my decease.

I likewise bequeath my books upon law to my sons James and William as tenants in common, some of which were my own purchase; and further I bequeath to my son James fifty acres of land lying north of and adjoining the land I live on, which was located in my own name and surveyed and returned by Mr. Donnel, to him, his heirs and assigns forever.

Fourthly. I give and bequeath to my daughters Mary, Ann, Margaret, Sarah, Susannah, Isabella and Elizabeth, about 100 acres of land, be the same more or less, the warrant being in my own name, and surveyed and returned by Henry Donnel, Esq., lying and being north and adjoining the west end of the place I live on, and north of my son John's land and adjoining it, to them, their heirs and assigns forever, share and share alike —but that they shall not dispose of it under two years after my decease, except in the family.

Fifthly. I give and bequeath to my grandson, Robert Shoemaker, son of Jacob Shoemaker, one heifer, two years old, or the value thereof.

Sixthly. Further I bequeath to my ten children, to wit: John, Mary, Ann, Margaret, Sarah, Susannah, James, Isabella, Elizabeth and William, all my right and title, claim and interest to 2,000 acres of land in the state of Kentucky, a present made by the present King of Great Britain to the officers of the Pennsylvania line, surveyed by William Thompson about the year 1771 or 1772, or thereabouts, and by him returned or offered to be returned to the officers of the land office then supposed to be under the government of Virginia, to whom their heirs and assigns forever as tenants in common, share and share alike.

It is my will in respect to my son James, that the residue of the personal property bequeathed to my wife, which she hath not disposed of before her decease, shall go to my son James and to his use.

Lastly, I nominate and appoint my two sons John and James executors of this my will and testament, hereby

revoking all former wills made by me.

ROBERT ROBB.

October 2, 1813.

Witness—Robt. Hawley, William Cox Ellis.

Probated Nov. 8, 1814.

* * *

From the date of the will until his death, September 10, 1814—was eleven months and eight days. It is unknown how long he was ill, but the presumption is that for one so vigorous and strong, death came suddenly and he passed away quietly and easily.

The family Bible, which he gave to his wife, has descended to his grandson, Robert Robb, of Muncy, and it is in a very good state of preservation. It contains a carefully written record, evidently by his own hand, of the births of his eleven children; and so exact is it, that in addition to the day of the month, the hour and the minute are given when each one came into the world.

The promise of a tract of land in Kentucky, made by the King of England to the officers who served under Bouquet in 1758, was made in good faith and was liberal, for land was plenty in those days. The changed conditions in the colonies, which followed the Declaration of Independence, destroyed the power of the British government to make good

the promise of the King eighteen years before. It would seem, however, that surveys were made and tracts of land numbered and entered on the drafts, but it does not appear that warrants were ever issued.

So confident, however, was the testator that these lands would be conveyed to the officers of that military expedition, that he gave a power of attorney to a friend in Cumberland county to attend to the business for him, and then apportioned his share among his children. The power of attorney, which is a curious document, may be found in Deed Book D, page 377, and is as follows:

Know all men by these presents that I, Robert Robb of Muncy Township, Lycoming County, State of Pennsylvania, Esq., have made, ordained and constituted and by these presents do make, ordain, and constitute, and in my place and stead put and depute my truly friend and brother-in-law, James Irvin, of Big Spring, Cumberland County, and State aforesaid, my true and lawful attorney for me and in my name and for my use, to ask, demand, sue for, recover and receive 2,000 acres of land in the settlement called "Caintucky," about three or four hundred miles westerly of fort Pitt, a gift of the King of Great Britain to the officers of the Pennsylvania battalion, and surveyed by William Thompson, Esq., and what he allotted for me was marked on the general plan, "Robert Robb, Lieut.," granting and giving to my said attorney to recover the same by any lawful way, ratifying and con-

firming whatsoever my said attorney may lawfully do in the premises.

Given under my hand and seal ---- day of December, 1806.

ROBERT ROBB.

Witness—Wm. Hepburn, who certified to the same December 17, 1806, one of the associated judges of the court of common pleas. Recorded Dec. 18, 1806.

There is nothing on record to show what steps, if any, ever were taken by Irvin to recover this Kentucky grant of land (then lying in Virginia), by George the II. However, it never was secured by the heirs of Mr. Robb and was lost to them forever.

* * *

Robert Robb, grandson of the subject of this sketch, resides in the borough of Muncy, whither he retired some years ago from the farm. He possesses a number of interesting mementos of his distinguished ancestor, among which are his commission, and several of his law and theological books. But more precious than all of them, is the old family Bible which was willed to his grandmother.

* * *

The old homestead farm is owned by Robert Robb, grandson, and is a place of historic interest. The original buildings long since gave way for more modern structures, but the spring, besides which the cabin of the pioneer was built one hundred and thirty years ago. still sends forth its pure, cooling waters to quench the

thirst of man and beast, but the face of the country under the hand of improvement has greatly changed. Thomas W. Robb, son of Robert Robb, of Muncy, and the fourth in lineal descent from the original settler, lives upon and cultivates the farm. He has an interesting family, and the old homestead is likely to remain in the possession of the Robb family for generations to come.

THE END.